



Policy Name	Programming		
Section & Number	Board – G-30	Effective Date	2023-09-21
Motion Number	2023 - 103	Last Review	
Author	Manager, Programming and Promotions	Next Review	2027

Policy Statement

The St. Catharines Public Library provides programming to fulfill its mission and vision as stated in the Strategic Plan. Programming raises the Library's profile in the community and encourages use of its collection and services. This policy provides direction and guidance to staff with respect to developing, facilitating and implementing programs, as well as providing the public with the criteria for programming decisions.

All programs should reflect the principles of accessibility, equity and inclusiveness, and should be carried out in accordance with the Canadian Federation of Library Associations' *Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries*, as well as SCPL's Mission, Values and Code of Conduct. All programming, including partnerships and co-planned programs, must be carried out in accordance with all applicable municipal, regional, provincial and federal legislation, and must not contravene the protected grounds under the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Scope

This policy applies to library programs offered to the community including library-led, co-planned, and community partnership programs, as well as outreach events.

This policy does not apply to programs offered by external organizations or groups to which the Library's Meeting Room Policy applies.

This policy does not apply to events developed for special purposes such as SCPL fundraising, volunteer recognition or like events.

Definitions

For the purpose of this Policy, the following definitions apply:

Community partnerships: refers to mutually beneficial arrangements between SCPL and external person(s) or organization(s). Both parties contribute to some aspect of program content, planning and delivery. (Example, Family History with the St. Catharines Museum)

Co-planned programs: refers to programs conducted by external persons or organizations for which the Library provides space, registration and promotion, but not content. The external programmer is responsible for the planning and delivery of the program. (Example, Brock Talks)

Library-led programs: refers to programs in which the entirety of the program, including content, is planned, created and delivered by library staff.

Outreach events: refers to events facilitated by library staff out in the community with the goal of building awareness of library services, resources, and programming.

Programs: is an umbrella term encompassing library led and co-planned programs, as well as community partnerships and outreach.

Protected grounds: refers to Ontario's Human Rights Code which prohibits discrimination based on the following protected grounds: age, ancestry, colour, race, citizenship, ethnic origin, place of origin, creed (Religion), disability, family status, marital status, gender identity, gender expression, receipt of public assistance, record of offences, sex and sexual orientation.

Regulations

[Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, c. H-19](#)

[Canadian Federation of Library Association's Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries \(2019\)](#)

[Policy G-07 Code of Conduct](#)

[Policy G-05 Meeting Rooms](#)

Responsibility

The CEO or designate is responsible for the overall administration of this policy.

Operational Guidelines

The Library will:

1. Provide programs for all ages that reflect the interests and needs of St. Catharines' diverse community, by focusing on, but not being limited to, early literacy, lifelong learning, health, cultural and professional subjects, civic engagement, digital inclusion, and recreation, as well as programs that encourage the use of library collections and services. Programming should provide general enjoyment for and enlightenment of the community.
2. Provide programs free of charge under most circumstances, although exceptions may be made to cover direct costs when the program could not be otherwise offered.
3. Provide programming that reflects a wide variety of opinions and viewpoints, recognizing that some topics and ideas may be controversial.

In its sole discretion, the Library may:

1. Limit attendance based on age, space requirements, audience, or registration.
2. Require registration or a library membership to attend a program.
3. Accept or reject program proposals from outside individuals and organizations based on the "Criteria for Co-Planned Programs" below.
4. On occasion, permit businesses, customers or volunteers to market their commercial products or services, only insofar as they uphold and comply with the Library's Strategic Plan, such as book sales or paid instruction.
5. Require a community partner, program presenter or performer to provide proof of a Police Vulnerable Sector Check issued within the last year when working with vulnerable individuals without staff supervision.
6. Require a community partner, program presenter or performer to provide, prior to the program start date, a Certificate of Insurance when requested, naming "the St. Catharines Public Library" as an additional insured, and indicating the required insurance coverage being provided.

Criteria for Co-Planned Programs

The Library may partner with organizations and individuals who align with our values of inclusion, change, community, teamwork, service and accountability in the delivery of programs. Preference will be given but not limited to:

- Not-for-profit and charitable organizations
- Individuals who are providing programs as a public service and not with the intent of making a profit
- Programs that are free or require a small fee for cost-recovery only

- Programs that promote an interest in reading, culture, information literacy and research skills, promote an awareness of contemporary issues and information needed to engage in society, or are simply entertaining, enjoyable, educational experiences
- Programs that support the freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression of all community members

Individuals or organizations wishing to present programs must complete the "[Program Application](#)" form. The Library, in its sole discretion, may refuse any program suggestion for reasons including, but not limited, to the following:

- It does not align with the Library's values or strategic goals
- It does not reflect a community need or interest
- It promotes a business or risks including some form of solicitation
- In the Library's opinion, the presenter does not have the necessary qualifications or experience

SCPL continuously reviews its programming to ensure it meets the needs and interests of our customers. Community members are encouraged to respectfully engage in an open exchange of ideas and opinions in a safe public space. On occasion, these ideas and opinions may be considered offensive to some, and while recognizing the right to object to a program or event at SCPL, such offence does not provide any individual or group the right to restrict the freedom of others to participate in library programs. Individuals wishing to object to a program may do so by submitting a "[Program Reconsideration](#)" form.

All Requests for Reconsideration will be reviewed by the Manager of Programming and Promotions in accordance with the Programming Policy. Their decision will be communicated to the requestor. Customers who are not satisfied with the response can submit an appeal to the C.E.O and subsequently the Library Board. The final decision on any challenge to a program rests with the Library Board.

Implementation

The CEO and Manager of Programming and Promotions or designate will implement this policy.